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ABSTRACT

This paper highlights some of the various resource centers that are involved with the exchange of noncomputerized data concerned with higher education. These centers are involved with the collection and dissemination of papers, exchange of ideas, and identification of knowledgeable people that can aid institutions in finding solutions to some of their problems. In each case the organization, a description of their functions and goals, and a contact person and/or address are indicated. (MJM)

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ERIC HIGHER EDUCATION

Research Currents

RESOURCE CENTERS FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

By Jonathan D. Fife

Across the country there exists an invaluable resource to all those who are involved with administering or planning for institutions of higher education. This resource is the variety of clearinghouses and information centers that have been established to collect and disseminate the most recent data concerning particular higher education problem areas. These centers can help an institution maximize its resources and its staff productivity by keeping the institution informed about the current developments and experiences of other institutions. In short, they can help an institution from reinventing the wheel.

This paper is a sequel to the *Research Currents* on "Computerized Data Sources for Higher Education" (Fife 1974). In that paper a sampling of the major computerized data sources were described. This paper will highlight some of the various resource centers that are involved with the exchange of noncomputerized data concerned with higher education. These centers are involved with the collection and dissemination of papers, exchange of ideas, and identification of knowledgeable people that can aid institutions in finding solutions to some of their problems. Due to the limitation of the length of a *Research Currents* only a small number of these centers will be highlighted. Many of the organizations described in the October 1974 *Research Currents* were resource centers, but to cover the maximum number of organizations they will not be covered again in this paper. Also, because of the idiosyncratic nature of each user's request and the organizational structure of the centers, costs of service will not be discussed.

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GENERAL OR DIRECTORIAL INFORMATION CENTERS

The first step that should be taken in finding solutions to a problem is to have that problem clearly defined. This usually entails an examination of the literature in that area. By examining the up-to-date literature, the seeker can establish what is the state of the art and what organizations or persons are writing in that area. **The ERIC Clearinghouse on Higher Education,** as one of the 16 clearinghouses in the Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC) information dissemination network, has been established to assist individuals in this task. Through the two ERIC indices, *Resources in Education* (formerly *Research in Education*) and *Current Index to Journals in Education* and through the expertise of their professional staff the Clearinghouse is able to quickly identify what current literature has been written in a particular area. The Clearinghouse, through its computerized bibliographic service, is able to produce for a small fee a comprehensive bibliography on a requested topic or problem area in a relatively short period of time. Once the literature base has been examined a user can develop more sophisticated questions when he approaches other resource centers or individuals who are working in that area of concern. [For further information contact: ERIC/Higher Education, The George Washington University, One Dupont Circle, Suite 630, Washington, D.C. 20036, (202) 296-2597.]

The identification of the literature can be considerably easier than the identification of people or organizations who have expertise in a problem area. **NEXUS,** a project of the American Association for Higher Education funded by a grant from the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education, has been established to ease this situation. NEXUS is a "people bank." Its sole objective is to connect people who need information with people who can provide it. It is felt that people who are starting new programs or are redesigning established programs can become better informed and make more rational decisions if they can discuss their plans with practitioners who have experience in the same or a related area. To achieve this end, NEXUS has developed a file of organizations and individuals according to their expertise. After identifying the scope of the problem, NEXUS will provide a list of resource people who may be able to offer assistance. [For further information contact: Jane Lichtman, Director, NEXUS, American Association for Higher Education, One Dupont Circle, Suite 780, Washington, D.C. 20036, (202) 785-8480.]

Jonathan D. Fife is associate director of the ERIC Clearinghouse on Higher Education. *The author gratefully acknowledges the assistance of Jane Lichtman, director, NEXUS, in the identification of the resource centers.*

NATIONAL AND REGIONAL COORDINATION CENTERS

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There are several interstate organizations that have been formed to improve the flow of information between and among legislators and educators. The largest of these organizations is the **Education Commission of the States** (ECS) founded in 1966. Every state in the nation now belongs to ECS with the exception of Arizona, Nevada, Montana, Mississippi and Georgia. It is the Commission's purpose to work with states to reform and renew education throughout the nation. Through its Higher Education Services Department, ECS has become a major postsecondary education communication link among the states and between state officials and professional associations, federal officials, and various regional and interinstitutional consortia. The Higher Education Service Department will also concentrate on specific critical issues that face the institutions. Recently it has focused on new management practices and techniques and financing of postsecondary education. As part of its regular services and in response to requests from the states, the Commission provides information on state-related activities and, when appropriate, suggests options and alternatives to meet specific state needs. [For further information contact: Resource Center, Education Commission of the States, 300 Lincoln Tower, 1860 Lincoln Street, Denver, Colorado 80203, (303) 893-5200.]

As administrator of the Western Regional Education Compact, the **Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education** (WICHE) is responsible for helping 13 western states work cooperatively to improve educational programs and facilities. Three of WICHE's goals are: to help institutions of higher education improve both academic and administrative institutional management, to assist the education community in appraising and responding to the changing needs of the west, and to increase the public's understanding of the role of higher education. Through its three major divisions—the Division of Regional Programs, the Division of Mental Health and Related Areas, and the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems at WICHE—WICHE supervises 31 separate programs and projects to achieve these goals. It is through these basic studies of educational needs and resources that WICHE, acting as a fact-finding agency and as a clearinghouse for information about higher education, creates stronger understanding and helps to stimulate improvements in higher education. [For further information contact: WICHE, P.O. Drawer P, Boulder, Colorado 80302, (303) 449-3333.]

The **Southern Regional Education Board** (SREB) is a coalition of educators, governors, government officials, and civic leaders working to advance postsecondary education and thereby improve the economic and social life of the south. Working directly with the state governments, academic institutions, and other agencies, SREB researches and reports on the needs, problems, and developments in higher education; conducts cooperative programs to upgrade undergraduate, graduate, and professional training; provides consultant services and serves as a physical agent and administrator in interstate arrangements for regional educational services and institutions. Specifically, SREB provides consultation in such fields as agricultural sciences, nursing, instructional media, financial aid and mental health training and research. [For further information contact: SREB, 130 Sixth Street, N.W., Atlanta, Georgia, 30313.]

The **New England Board of Higher Education** (NEBHE) is an agency of the six New England states. Like WICHE and SREB, NEBHE was created by a compact among these states with the purpose of developing and operating programs that expand opportunities in higher education in the region. The activities of the Board include: (1) The Regional Student Program, which works to improve access of students to the unique programs of the regional state institutions and negotiates contracts with public and private institutions for spaces in high-cost programs such as health and medicine; (2) directing operations services to institutions and agencies, such as the Northeast Academic Science Information Center and the New England Library Information Network; (3) publishing studies on enrollment, program, and cost data, and analyses of specific topics and problems in higher education; and (4) serving as a convener and clearinghouse for regional academic and professional groups. [For further information contact: Phyllis Lary, New England Board of Higher Education, 40 Grove Street, Wellesley, Massachusetts 02181, (617) 235-8071.]

PROBLEM-CENTERED RESOURCE CENTERS

By far, the majority of resource centers specialize in the dissemination of information concerned with specific problem areas. The staff size and capability of these centers vary considerably, with a great many of them depending on "soft" money for support. The following list of resource centers described in alphabetical order of problem area should not be considered inclusive. Many other resource centers exist that serve different clientele and different subject matter. The reader is encouraged to contact NEXUS to identify other resource centers that may be more pertinent to their needs.

Collective Bargaining—The **Academic Collective Bargaining Information Service** (ACBIS), funded by the Carnegie Corporation and sponsored by the American Association of State Colleges and Universities, Association of American Colleges, and National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges, has been established to gather and disseminate information and to provide research and consultation services in the field of academic collective bargaining. The project attempts to identify those issues unique to higher education, to investigate the effects of collective bargaining on colleges and universities, and to find solutions to the special problems arising from the interface between labor law and higher education. ACBIS services include monographs and special reports; research of selected issues, focusing primarily on the varieties of state and federal legislation and the impact of collective bargaining in both public and private universities and colleges; and an information service that will respond to questions of a factual nature, but will not give advice or opinions. [For further information contact: George W. Angell, Director, ACBIS, 1818 R Street, N.W. Washington, D.C. 20009, (202) 387-3760.]

Commuters—The focus of the **National Clearinghouse for Commuter Programs** is students of higher education who do not live in institution-owned residence halls. The Clearinghouse has been designed to communicate and share data concerning the characteristics, attitudes, needs, and behavior of commuter students and to establish communication among the schools developing innovative programs and services. The Clearinghouse provides a quarterly newspaper, *The Commuter*, annotated bibliographies of relevant litera-

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ture, monographs on planning, and master plans for commuter institutions. [For further information contact: Mark W. Hardwick, National Clearinghouse for Commuter Programs, 1211 Student Union, University of Maryland, College Park, Maryland 20742, (301) 454-5274.]

Consortia—The **Institutional Cooperative Program** is the only national information center on voluntary, cooperative, and coordinative arrangements. Basic to the program is the belief that the voluntary approach to institutional planning and programming helps groups of colleges, universities, and other participants by providing new and more accessible educational opportunities, improving the quality and flexibility of existing programs, and gaining advantages of economy and efficiency through joint action. The program offers a variety of services, including addressing individual needs through correspondence, telephone calls, visits, and on-site consultations. [For further information contact: Lew Patterson, Institutional Cooperative Program, One Dupont Circle, Suite 780, Washington, D.C. 20036, (202) 293-6440.]

Experiential Learning—**The National Center for Public Service Internship Programs** was formed to serve the needs of public service internship and experiential education programs, to encourage and facilitate the establishment of such programs in academic institutions, and to promote the acceptance of such programs as a specific and viable component of education. The National Center provides information on such issues as: internship funding, program design, educational components, and assessment techniques. This information is disseminated on a regular basis through a monthly newsletter and a program catalog. Current publications of the National Center include the *Directory of Washington Internships* and the *Directory of Public Service Internships: Opportunity for Graduate, Post Graduate, and Mid-career Professional* (Ungerer 1974). Other projects of the Center are a national registry of internships and experiential education; NODEVAL, a system of marginal evaluation of field experience in internship programs; and a journal on internship programs. [For further information contact: Richard Ungerer, National Center for Public Service Internship Programs, 1735 Eye Street, N.W., Suite 601, Washington, D.C. 20006, (202) 331-1316.]

Intercultural Information—The **Intercultural Communication Network** was established in 1970 to serve as a central point for coordinating and disseminating information on the newly developing and relatively undefined field of intercultural communication. Its particular emphasis is on the application of intercultural communication concepts in international education exchange that relates to foreign student affairs on American campuses. Some of the essential aims of the network are: to develop the use of intercultural communication workshops within colleges and universities; facilitate the greater interaction of American and foreign students; promote basic and applied research in intercultural communication; assist colleges and universities in developing formal courses in intercultural communication; and link the academic dimension of intercultural communication (teaching, research, and intercultural workshops) with other areas of application, particularly the field of professional cross-intercultural training as practiced by those who train Peace Corps volunteers, businessmen, government personnel, and others who work overseas. [For further information contact: David S. Hoopes, Executive Director, The Intercultural Communication Network, 4401 Fifth Avenue, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15213, (412) 621-5492.]

The **Council for Intercultural Study and Programs** is a cooperative association of educational organizations and institutions established to strengthen the transnational intercultural concerns of the learning community of students and teachers primarily at the undergraduate level. Drawing on the personnel of its member associations and institutions, the Council offers a wide variety of consultative and evaluative services relating to intercultural studies in undergraduate education, including assistance in developing proposals for outside support. [For further information contact: Council for Intercultural Studies and Programs, Foreign Area Material Center, 60 East 42nd Street, New York, New York 10017.]

The **Center for International Programs in Comparative Studies** has a special interest in societies and cultures of Asia, Africa, Latin America, and other non-European regions of the world. The Center is engaged in developing knowledge about foreign educational systems and helping institutions implement opportunities for educational exchange and overseas activities. [For further information contact: Arthur M. Osten, Center for International Programs in Comparative Studies, 99 Washington Avenue, Albany, New York 12230, (518) 474-5801.]

Also involved with intercultural and international programs of U.S. colleges and universities is the **World Study Data Bank.** The Data Bank maintains current information on 3,300 international programs of all kinds. This includes study abroad; area studies, such as Asian and Eastern European studies; and topical studies, such as population control and urban development. The World Studies Data Bank will provide responses to individual information requests; directories, such as the area studies directory; inventory of programs according to type, area of study, sponsoring institution, or source of funding; and analysis of trends and developments in intercultural education. [For further information contact: Leonard P. Iaquinta, World Studies Data Bank, 680 Fifth Avenue, New York, New York 10019, (212) 265-3350.]

Personalized Instruction—**Center for Personalized Instruction** was created to provide help to college teachers who want to use individualized instruction in their class. Personalized System of Instruction (PSI) is a teaching technique designed to increase the effectiveness of instruction. This technique uses as instructional tools self-pacing, mastery, emphasis on written material, and students as peer-proctors, with lectures being used as motivational devices. The activities of the Center include regional conferences, workshops, the publication of the *PSI Newsletter,* and the distribution of literature on individualized instruction at the college level. [For further information contact: The Center for Personalized Instruction, Georgetown University, 29 Loyola Hall, Washington, D.C. 20007, (202) 625-3176.]

Student Activities—The **Student Government Information Service** (SGIS) of the National Student Association has become a major source of information concerning student-initiated programs and activities. The SGIS is intended to strengthen campus-based student activities by providing them with information on the experiences of students at other institutions and with the expertise developed by the National Student Association. In addition to responding to inquiries, SGIS has a library of resource books, bibliographies that can be used to gather background information, how-to manuals, college catalogs, and student newspapers. [For further information contact: SGIS, The United States National Student Association, 2115 S Street, N.W. Washington, D.C. 20008, (202) 265-9890.]

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Trustees—A grant from the Lilly Endowment has enabled the Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges to establish a **Trustee Information Clearinghouse.** Through the development of fact files in the areas of board policies and practices, board composition, collective bargaining, and evaluation of administrators, the clearinghouse is able to offer a comprehensive information service on lay trusteeship and institutional governance. Researchers considering studies on lay trusteeship or institutional governance are encouraged to contact the clearinghouse in order to refine study strategies and to avoid duplication of efforts. [For further information contact: Nancy R. Axelrod, Trustee Information Clearinghouse, One Dupont Circle, Suite 720, Washington, D.C. 20036, (202) 296-8402.]

Women—The **Project on the Status and Education of Women** has a dual focus: the status of women employees and the education of women students. Its purpose is to provide the higher education community with a clearinghouse of information about "what's happening" with women in higher education. The services provided by the Project include legislation summaries (summaries of individual laws and relevant court decisions), recruiting materials, topical papers, and a newsletter. [For further information contact: Project on the Status of the Education of Women, AAC, 1818 R Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20009, (202) 387-1300.]

CONCLUSION

The organizations cited in this paper are but a few of the resource centers that are available. Many other organizations have not been cited because they are either too general in scope or may restrict their services to their membership. Organizations such as professional associations, institutional associations, and federal and state education departments may be viable sources of information. They may be identified through the *Education Directory, 1973-74* (Poole 1974), the *Encyclopedia of Associations* (1975), NEXUS, or through the **Library of the National Center for Higher Education**. [For further information contact: Mary Allen, NCHE Library, One Dupont Circle, Suite 640, Washington, D.C. 20036, (202) 833-4690.]

It is hoped that the above listing will provide a stimulus for greater utilization of these and other clearinghouses and centers. Learning about the successes and failures of others can greatly improve an institution's planning and help to promote more efficient use of financial resources.

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